

THE

ל'פ"א

SHEKEL



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EDWARD SCHUMAN, Editor

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AMERICAN ISRAEL NUMISMATIC ASSOCIATION

12555 Biscayne Blvd. #733 North Miami, FL 33181

Tel 305-4662833 Fax 305-4662834 Email feathers@bellsouth.net

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The American Israel Numismatic Association (A.I.N.A.) is a cultural and educational organization dedicated to the study and collection of Israel's coinage, past and present, and all aspects of Judaic numismatics. A.I.N.A. is a democratically organized, membership oriented group, chartered as a not for profit association under the laws of The State of New York. A.I.N.A.'s primary purpose is the development of programs, publications, meetings and other activities which will bring news, history, social and related background to the study and collection of Judaic numismatics, and the advancement of the hobby. The Association supports a web page <http://amerisrael.com> in which full information about the organization and a sampling of past articles from the SHEKEL are shown. The Association attends national and regional conventions, sponsors study tours to Israel, publication of books and catalogs and other activities which will be of benefit to the members. A.I.N.A. supports Young Numismatists programs which encourage and introduce youth to our hobby. Audio-visual and slide programs are available from the A.I.N.A. archives on many Judaica subjects and are available at no cost except for transportation charges. Local Israel Numismatic Society chapters exist in several areas. Please write for further information.

The Association publishes the SHEKEL six times a year. It has been referred to as a Jewish Reader's Digest. The SHEKEL is a journal and news magazine prepared for the enlightenment and education of the membership. You are invited to submit an article for publication.

Annual Membership fees:

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Mel Wacks

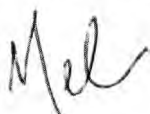
Coins are unique in that they can only be issued by a government. Individuals can't make coins no matter how rich they are. Corporations or organizations can't make coins no matter how large or influential they might be. Coins have a legal tender value, and as it says on U.S. paper money, coins and paper money are "legal tender for all debts, public and private." So money can be used to pay taxes or to buy an ice cream cone.

Coins are an important symbol of national sovereignty. When ancient Judaea was under the yolk of the Syrians, the Jews were not permitted to issue coins. And so it was significant when in 139 BCE Antiochus VII Sidetes, King of Syria, granted "Simon (Maccabeus) the High Priest and prince of his nation, and to the people of the Jews ... leave to coin money for thy country with thine own stamp." While coins of Simon are unknown, some years later his descendent issued the first coins authorized by a Jewish state. But only bronze coins were issued while the Jewish state was subservient to the Syrian Greeks and later the Romans. The only time that the ancient Judaeans issued silver coins was during the two revolts against Rome - producing Shekels and Half Shekels during the First Revolt (66-70 CE), Tetradrachms (Sela'im) and Denarii (Zusim) during the Bar Kochba Revolt (132-135 CE). No gold coins were ever issued by the ancient Jews!

Then, for over 1,800 years, there were no Jewish coins ... until the establishment of Israel in 1948. The first coins of Israel were 25 Mils, which were crudely produced in a local factory in Jerusalem. The first Israeli silver coins -- 250 and 500 Mils -- were issued the following year. It was not until Israel celebrated its tenth Anniversary of Independence that the first silver commemorative "Menorah" coins were issued ... and the first gold coin ever issued by a Jewish nation didn't appear until 1960, commemorating the 100th Anniversary of the Birth of Theodor Herzl.

I urge all of our members to purchase one or more new Israel commemorative coins every year -- to support the State of Israel, and to own a unique piece of history. There is also no better way to pass on an appreciation of thousands of years of Jewish history and culture than to give a youngster a gift of an Israel coin.

Happy collecting!



THE EDITOR'S PAGE

By Edward Schuman

All of the annual dues notices have been mailed out and we wish to thank those members who have responded promptly. **If your dues are not paid, this will be the last issue you can receive.** We have received several telephone calls and letters from survivors of members who have passed away. Amongst the calls was one advising us that life member Edward Baruch was no longer with us. Ed was an early member of A.I.N.A., an enthusiastic collector active in several Israel Numismatic Society clubs in the New York area who collected Israel coins and paper money. He also contributed several articles to the SHEKEL in the early years. He will be missed.

A.I.N.A. is running several membership promotions which give free Israel silver commemorative coins, donated by past president Arnold Kagan, as a bonus for signing up new members. Won't you take advantage of this offer and help A.I.N.A. recruit new members while adding to your collection?

The annual A.I.N.A. membership medal has been issued. Designed by our president, Mel Wacks, it commemorates the 10th anniversary of Albert Einstein's equation $E=mc^2$. The medal is being mailed with this issue of the SHEKEL. The Israel Government Coins and Medals Corp. has also issued a commemorative coin for Albert Einstein which is described on the back cover of the magazine.

This issue has many unique articles. Dr. David L. Nathan has extensively researched the Hebrew letter *Aleph* on the New World's first coin, and supplied a photo ready manuscript for us to print. This is a monumental article, perhaps among the finest we have published. Also in this issue is *Manchurian Memories*, a story about Jews from Czarist Russia, and how they sought refuge from persecution in a remote part of China. There is an article on *Yiddish*, the universal language spoken by Jews throughout the world. Emma Lazarus and the Statue of Liberty article, complete with her poetry rounds out the issue.

Florence and I plan to represent A.I.N.A. at the FUN convention in Orlando, FL the 6th to the 8th of January. If you are in the area we would like to meet you.

Till the next issue



A IS FOR ANCIENT, DESCRIBING AN ALPHABET FOUND NEAR JERUSALEM

By John Noble Wilford



Courtesy of The Zeitah Excavations and Israel Antiquities Authority
Detail of the "ABC" Inscription from Tel Zayit, showing the letters *waw* through *tet*.

In the 10th century B.C., in the hill country south of Jerusalem, a scribe carved his A B C's on a limestone boulder - actually, his aleph-beth-gimel's, for the string of letters appears to be an early rendering of the emergent Hebrew alphabet. Archaeologists digging in July at the site, Tel Zayit, found the inscribed stone in the wall of an ancient building. After an analysis of the layers of ruins, the discoverers concluded that this was the earliest known specimen of the Hebrew alphabet and an important benchmark in the history of writing. If they are right, the stone bears the oldest reliably dated example of an abecedar - the letters of the alphabet written out in their traditional sequence.

Several scholars who have examined the inscription tend to support that view. Experts in ancient writing said the find showed that at this stage the Hebrew alphabet was still in transition from its Phoenician roots, but recognizably Hebrew. The Phoenicians lived on the coast north of Israel, in today's Lebanon, and are considered the originators of alphabetic writing, several centuries earlier.

The discovery of the stone was described in interviews with Ron E. Tappy, the archaeologist at the Pittsburgh Theological Seminary who directed the dig. All successive alphabets in the ancient world, including the Greek one, derive from this ancestor at Tel Zayit.

The research is supported by an anonymous donor to the seminary, which has a long history in archaeological field work. The project is also associated with the American Schools of Oriental Research and the W. F. Albright Institute for Archaeological Research, in Jerusalem.

Frank Moore Cross Jr., a Harvard expert on early Hebrew inscriptions

who was not involved in the research, said the inscription "is a very early Hebrew alphabet, maybe the earliest, and the letters I have studied are what I would expect to find in the 10th century" before Christ.

P. Kyle McCarter Jr., an authority on ancient Middle Eastern writing at Johns Hopkins University, was more cautious, describing the inscription as "a Phoenician type of alphabet that is being adapted." But he added, "I do believe it is proto-Hebrew, but I can't prove it for certain."

Lawrence E. Stager, an archaeologist at Harvard engaged in other excavations in Israel, said the pottery styles at the site "fit perfectly with the 10th century, which makes this an exceedingly rare inscription." But he added that more extensive radiocarbon dating would be needed to establish the site's chronology.

The Tel Zayit stone was uncovered at an eight-acre site in the region of ancient Judah, south of Jerusalem, and 18 miles inland from Ashkelon, an ancient Philistine port. The two lines of incised letters, apparently the 22 symbols of the Hebrew alphabet, were on one face of the 40-pound stone. A bowl-shaped hollow was carved in the other side, suggesting that the stone had been a drinking vessel for cult rituals. The stone may have been embedded in the wall because of a belief in the alphabet's power to ward off evil.

In a study of the alphabet, Dr. McCarter noted that the Phoenician-based letters were "beginning to show their own characteristics." The Phoenician symbol for what is the equivalent of a K is a three-stroke trident; in the transitional inscription, the right stroke is elongated, beginning to look like a backward K. Another baffling peculiarity is that in four cases the letters are reversed in sequence; an F, for example, comes before an E.

The inscription was found in the context of a substantial network of buildings at the site, which led Dr. Tappy to propose that Tel Zayit was probably an important border town established by an expanding Israelite kingdom based in Jerusalem. A border town of such size and culture suggested a centralized bureaucracy, political leadership and literacy levels that seemed to support the biblical image of the unified kingdom of David and Solomon in the 10th century B.C.

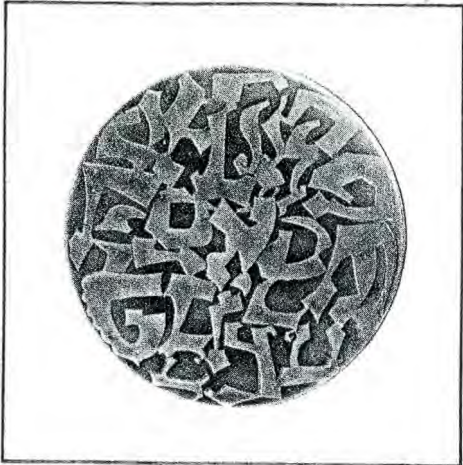
"That puts us right in the middle of the squabble over whether anything important happened in Israel in that century," Dr. Stager said.

A vocal minority of scholars contend that the Bible's picture of the 10th century B.C. as a golden age in Israelite history is insupportable. Some archaeological evidence, they say, suggests that David and Solomon were little more than tribal chieftains and that it was another century before a true political state emerged.

Dr. Tappy acknowledged that he was inviting controversy by his interpretation of the Tel Zayit stone and other artifacts as evidence of a fairly advanced political system 3,000 years ago. Critics who may accept the date and description of the inscription are expected to challenge him when he reports on the findings at meetings of the American Schools of Oriental Research and the Society of Biblical Literature.



The reverse side of the El-Al State medal issued in Israel in 1969 is filled with stylized Hebrew letters, free and uneven. The entire Hebrew alphabet, consisting of 22 letters, are enclosed within a circle surrounding the Hebrew “aleph” which is placed in the center.



A HEBREW LETTER ON THE NEW WORLD'S FIRST COINS?

by David L. Nathan, M.D.

Throughout the Middle Ages, Jews were involved in the minting of coins. At various times, they worked as assayers, die makers, or proprietors in the mints of nearly every European country, including Spain, England, France, Germany, Austria, Hungary and Poland. There is extensive documentation of Jewish minters' activities, as royal edicts granting them privileges are still found in many medieval archives. Occasionally, Medieval coins themselves contain clues to Jewish involvement in the form of Hebrew letters or Jewish names. Such evidence may have been identified on the very first coins minted in the Western Hemisphere. The inscriptions of nearly all the early coins of *Nueva España* ("New Spain") lack the usual symbol of a cross potent (✠), and instead contain what appears to be the Hebrew letter א (*alef*). If these unusual features are more than coincidental, then the coins represent the earliest first-hand expression of a Jewish presence in the New World.

"New Spain" was the name given to the vast region of North America claimed by Spain in the early 16th century, including nearly all of Central America, Florida, and what is now the southwestern United States. Its capital was in Mexico City, where the famous (and infamous) *conquistador* Hernando Cortés had defeated the Aztecs of Teotihuacán in 1521. Soon after the conquest, a stream of colonists flocked to the area, and a civil government was established in 1535-6.

Among the early European settlers were large numbers of "New Christians" or *conversos*, former Jews that had chosen to convert to Christianity rather than leave Spain during the expulsion of the Jews in 1492. During the early decades of the Spanish Inquisition, thousands of these converts were put to death amid accusations of practicing Judaism in secrecy. While some denunciations were certainly false, there were indeed many "crypto-Jews" throughout Spain.

Some of the persecuted *conversos* saw opportunities for greater tolerance in Mexico, where the Inquisition did not begin systematic persecution of Jews until 1571. A number of authoritative sources conclude that Judaism was practiced openly for most of the time before the Church's crackdown. The historian Alfonso Toro asserts:

"In spite of the legal prohibitions we found that many Israelites went to the New World, that they had a role in its conquest and discovery, as also in the foundation of the colonial society; thus one finds them in all social classes and playing a role in the professions and offices." (*Los judíos en Nueva España*, translated in Liebman's *The Jews in New Spain*).



Mexican 4 reales, c. 1538 (Nesmith 6a). The piece is a double strike, the die having been twice impressed on the silver planchet. This resulted in shifting and doubling of some design elements on both sides. Note the purported alef at the top of the reverse as well as (rotated and flattened) between words on both sides. The "R" minter's mark is found between the base of the pillars on the reverse. Obverse inscription:

KAROLVS:K:ET:K:IO[H]AN[A]

Reverse inscription: K:HISPANIE:K:ET:K:INDIARVM

Diameter=42mm.

The first viceroy of New Spain, don Antonio de Mendoza, arrived in Mexico City in 1535. He brought equipment for producing coins, along with a royal decree from Queen Johanna authorizing him to establish a mint and appoint qualified officials. The first officials of the mint were:

Treasurer (1535-38): Garcia Manrique, Count of Osorno, appointed by King Charles
Vice-treasurer (1537-41): Alonso de Mérida, appointed by Manrique

Assayer (1536-38): Francisco del Rincón, appointed by Mendoza, also known as the "R" assayer for the minter's mark he placed on his coins

Scribe (1535-?): Pedro Juárez de Carabajal

Die maker (1536-38): Antón de Vides

Workman (1536-?): Alonso Ponce

The bulk of the actual coining depended upon less skilled employees, low-paid Indian peasants and African slaves. Typical for most professions of that time, women were rarely employed in the minting of coins.

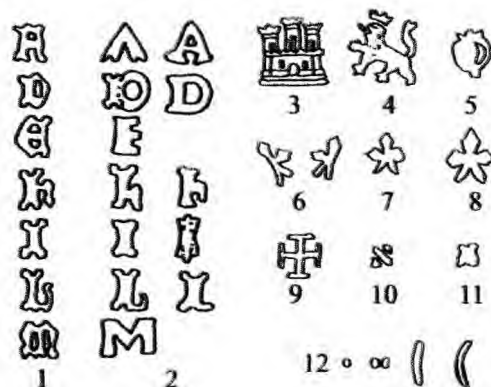
While none of the relevant mint officials are known to have been Jewish, and *conversos* often took the names of their Christian neighbors, a few similarities are noted between these mint officials and known Jewish families in the New World. The scribe shares a surname with a prominent Mexican *converso* family. The poet Luiz de Carvajal, nephew of an early governor in Mexico, was burned at the stake with most of his family and a number of other crypto-Jews on a single day in 1596.

The surname of the die maker, Antón de Vides, is similar to de Vidas, the surname of one or more prominent Jewish families in Spain. There was a 14th century Spanish Jew named Samuel ben Habib de Vidas, who was a scholar and possibly also a physician. Rabbi Ephraim de Vidas of Segovia left Spain in 1492, while his son Gabriel chose to remain and convert to Christianity. According to the Sephardic scholar Dr. Albert de Vidas, the family comes from Lalueza, not far from Zaragoza, in Aragon. One branch of the family went to the Ottoman Empire in 1492, and another to Holland by way of Italy. A *converso* branch went to Bordeaux, France three generations after the Expulsion and some were found in what would later become Haiti.

In order to consider whether a Jew was involved in early Mexican coin manufacture, the minting process must be understood. During the early days of the Mexican mint, coins were produced manually by hammering a blank silver planchet between two dies. Nearly all of the few dozen surviving coins were produced from unique dies, indicating that the dies were frequently replaced. Each die needed to be hand crafted, using letter and design punches that were driven into the steel surface one at a time. Every detail on a coin needed to be carefully planned, and no two dies or coins were alike. Thus, designs and inscriptions varied greatly even among coins that were intended to be identical.

In 1955, Robert Nesmith published the seminal text on early Mexican coins, *The Coinage of the First Mint of the Americas at Mexico City: 1536-1572*. He describes all known die varieties of the so-called

"Early Series" of Mexican coins (made between 1536 and 1542). He also catalogues most of the punches that were used to produce these coin dies.



Die punches used in coins of Francisco del Rincón (the "R" assayer), after Nesmith:

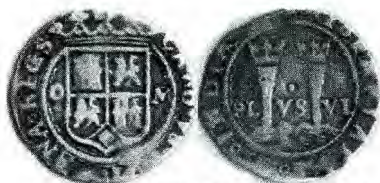
1. Examples of original Gothic letter punches from Spain. 2. Replacement Gothic and Latin letter punches.
3. Castle. 4. Rampant lion.
5. Pomegranate. 6. Side finials for crown. 7. Small finial. 8. Large finial.
9. Cross potent. 10. Purported *alef* punch. 11. Worn version of (10).
12. Examples of ornamental and geometric punches.

There were several groups of punches used during the tenure of the "R" assayer, del Rincón:

1. A pomegranate, castle, and rampant lion used in the Spanish coat of arms;
2. Crown finials;
3. A cross potent (✞);
4. Latin letters used in the inscription;
5. An ornamental design used as a word separator; and
6. Small geometric shapes used together to impress borders, pillars and other complex designs onto the die.

The first coins minted under del Rincón's supervision were silver coins of $\frac{1}{4}$, $\frac{1}{2}$, 1, 2, 3 and 4 reales. The varieties of each denomination can be placed in roughly chronological order according to the fraction of letters made from the original Gothic letter punches that Mendoza brought from Spain. As those punches wore out, they were replaced with crudely made punches produced locally. When the second assayer succeeded del Rincón in 1538, an entirely new set of punches was used.

Among the earliest coins from del Rincón's tenure were two varieties of 3 reales coins that featured a cross potent. Perhaps that punch broke or it was simply no longer preferred, but in either case *not one* of the other twenty varieties of coins from the "R" assayer



A one real coin dating to 1542-1572. The cross potent is at the top of the reverse, but in this off-center example only the base is seen.

Diameter=22mm.

(del Rincón) shows a cross of any kind. This disappearance is not seen with letter punches (also integral to the inscription), which were replaced whenever needed.

By contrast, virtually all 16th century coins from the Spanish Empire contain a cross in the inscription, in the central design, or both. Nearly all the coins produced in Mexico after 1538 follow this pattern as well, exceptions being a few small coins that perhaps could not accommodate the design. This trend is consistent with the Spanish monarchy's close alliance with the Catholic Church. The relationship with the Vatican was so close that Pope Alexander VI conferred upon Ferdinand and Isabella the collective title of "*Los Reyes Católicos*" [the Catholic Kings].

Might the cross have been omitted from the early Mexican coins because of a Jewish connection? The evidence for this is, for the moment, purely circumstantial. The use of a cross may have been intolerable to a nominally converted Jew. We know that the Mexican Inquisition identified some alleged crypto-Jews by their witnessed disrespect for the cross, avoidance of Mass or pork, or fasting on Jewish holidays. Thus, there were at least some features of Christianity that certain *conversos* shunned, and some rituals of Judaism that they perpetuated.

In place of a cross potent on the top of the reverse of early Mexican coins, there is a symbol that looks strikingly similar to a letter *alef*. It was clearly produced from a punch specially designed to create this shape. With the exception of two tiny ¼ real varieties, every known coin of del Rincón uses this punch at the position of prominence. It is also frequently used between words in the inscriptions.

The presence of the purported *alef* and the absence of a cross make these coins quite different from the vast majority of 16th century Spanish and Mexican coins. The *alef*-like ornamentation is not seen on any other coin produced at Spanish mints, unlike other word separators and ornaments that were frequently reproduced.



*A Hebrew letter alef (א) on a
one obol coin of King
Stephan of Hungary, c. 1270.
Diameter = 10-11mm.*

There are a number of precedents for the use of Hebrew letters on otherwise Latin Medieval coins. The best known of these is a series of 13th century Hungarian coins, described by Daniel Friedenberg in *Jewish Minters & Medalists*. Several mint masters put their marks upon tiny coins using an

alef, *chet* (ח), *tet* (ט), or *shin* (ש). They represent Jewish officials at the Hungarian mint, for example, *alef* for Altman and *chet* for Chenokh.

So, if this is indeed an *alef*, why is it there? A lack of corroborating information precludes a definitive explanation. There are, however, several possibilities, ranging from the merely coincidental to the highly symbolic.

The unidentified maker of the die punch may have produced a shape that innocently looks like a Medieval Spanish *alef* but is devoid of any Jewish connotations. Or perhaps he had a Jewish connection and intended the shape to be an *alef*, but other mint officials were ignorant of this when they inserted the *alef* repeatedly into the coins' inscription. Both of these explanations seem contradicted by the unusually extensive use of that punch, documented by Nesmith, even when it was worn down to a fuzzy blob of metal.

In fact, given the subtle variation in this shape on different coins, there may have actually been more than one purported *alef* punch used during del Rincón's tenure. Other design elements, such as a cross or crown finial, could have been used in place of the *alef*, but for some reason they were seldom chosen.

Perhaps the figure is indeed a Hebrew letter, but was placed there by a Christian for unknown reasons. There is at least one apparent precedent for this: a *shin* found on a 1590 coin from France has no known Jewish connection.

Another interpretation is that this was a minter's mark like those used in the Hungarian coins already discussed. The *alef* could have been the first letter of a name, such as Abraham (אַבְרָהָם). Such marks, usually Latin or Gothic letters, are found on the majority of Medieval coins and all of the 16th century coins of Mexico. Was de Vides, del Rincón or another early mint official a crypto-Jew who wanted to slip a symbol of his faith onto these historic coins, while omitting the cross? Did several Jews or sympathizers need to collaborate in a kind of conspiracy? While there is no historical corroboration yet known, I suspect that the die maker Antón de Vides had the best opportunity to insert the *alef* on the coins, and the *alef* may be related to his name rather than del Rincón's. Answers might



Examples of the Hebrew letter alef (א) from a neatly inscribed 13th century Spanish manuscript (Sirat 1976).

someday be found if undiscovered records exist about the backgrounds of the first mint officials.

An argument against the *alef* being a minter's mark is that this punch is frequently used multiple times on del Rincón's coins between words of the inscription. A minter's mark generally appears only once or twice on a coin. However, other than at the top of the reverse, the purported *alef* often appears rotated 90° and somewhat poorly struck. If the design element is truly an *alef*, then the perplexing use of the punch may have been intentional. Any crypto-Jew or *converso* who chose to put a Jewish element onto a coin would probably have had the good sense to make the reference a subtle one. Certainly it was subtle enough to have gone unnoticed for nearly five hundred years of numismatic study. One might expect that crypto-Jews would keep their faith well hidden, and that *conversos* would not want to call attention to their Jewish heritage. This may be the ultimate reason why a definitive interpretation of these coins proves difficult.

When the next assayer took office, the purported *alef* design element abruptly and permanently disappears. The cross is given a place of prominence on Mexican colonial coins, where it would remain for hundreds of years. The change would appear to correlate with del Rincón's and de Vides' departures, but it is unknown whether other mint employees may have left at the same time. Also, when del Rincón returned for a second two-year term in the 1540s, the cross potent was in its usual place on his coins.

There are clear differences between del Rincón's coins and other 16th century coins of the Spanish Empire, but the case of the missing cross and mysterious *alef* is far from solved. There *may* have been a Jew in the employ of the Mexican mint during the 1530s, and that individual *may* have wished to make his hidden presence known to future generations. If so, he has finally succeeded.



Close-up of a purported alef used on the Mexican 4 reales, c. 1538 (Nesmith 6a). Note the resemblance to the examples of the letter alef from a Medieval Spanish manuscript (above).

Acknowledgments:

The author wishes to thank Ira Rezak, M.D. of SUNY Stony Brook for his comments and suggestions in the preparation of this article.

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THE SYNAGOGUE AT WORMS AND THE TWO MARTYRS

The high antiquity of the Synagogue at Worms, as also that of several others in Germany, is, as will be easily understood, resting rather more on legendary than any actual historical authority. The Synagogue at Worms is one of the oldest in the world. It is supposed to have been built at the time when the second temple was erected. It is in the rear of a court-yard, around which are stone benches. A door opens from this court, which leads to a small round space, also surrounded with stone benches, in the center of which is a raised platform, where still remains the seat once occupied by the celebrated Rabbi Salomon Yarchi. From that platform he preached his admirable lessons of piety and goodness; his name is engraved on it, and no one is ever permitted to occupy the seat once filled by that venerated rabbi.

An **℞** is carved on one of the stones. Those among his pupils that he did not deem prepared to listen to his learned discourses, were thus reminded that they must recommence their studies, even from the first letter of the alphabet.

In this Synagogue two lamps are always kept burning; under them is the following inscription: "The perpetual light of the two strangers." These lamps are in memory of two martyrs who sacrificed their own lives to ensure the safety of the Jewish community of Worms. The following is the legendary account of this circumstance.

Religious procession through the streets of Worms were of common occurrence in the dark times of the middle ages; times when fanaticism had changed all the noble sentiments of humanity into fury and cruelty; when pity and mercy towards religious dissenters were unfelt, when the fundamental principles of all true religion were unknown.

One day the procession passed through the streets occupied by the Jews. Crowds of persons swelled the throng and scarcely had it entered this quarter, when voices were heard proclaiming that the crucifix had been insulted. Loud rang the cries for revenge; the guilty trespasser must be given up, that his blood might wipe out the indignity offered to the cross.

Seven days were granted to the Jews for the discovery of the guilty person. If he were not delivered up at that time, the lives of all the Israelites at Worms were doomed to expiate his offence. The seventh day (it was also the seventh day of the feast of Passover) came, and fear and agony filled the heart of every Israelite in Worms. On the morning of that day, when the beadle of the Synagogue went as usual to call the people to the

house of prayer, he heard loud knocks at the gate, enclosing the Jews' quarters. It was always kept locked during any Jewish or Christian festival. The beadle asked who was there. "Two Jews, who wish to be admitted," was the reply. "Who are you, and from whence do you come? Know you not, that whoever enters within our gates this day exposes himself to the fury of an enraged populace? If aid come not from Heaven this day, we all are lost."

"We know it; we know the fearful fate that awaits you; it is to save you from it that we now plead for admittance."

The gates were opened, and the two strangers entered; their names, their residence, were a mystery that each alike refused to solve. A few hours passed by, and the infuriated populace, fired with thoughts of vengeance, rushed in among the Jews. Then the two strangers were seen advancing, and with voices that faltered not, thus addressed the excited multitude:

"Spare, oh, spare these people! Sully not your hands with the blood of innocent victims. Let our lives satisfy you. We alone are guilty of the alleged crime. On our heads let the weight of your displeasure fall!"

And thus nobly did they perish, though racked by the most cruel tortures. From that day forward, the two lamps that were lighted in their memory have never been extinguished; for ever will they burn, bright symbols of the divine flame that animated the hearts of the two pure men who sacrificed their lives for the safety of those who were strangers to them. Every year, on the seventh day of Passover, prayers for the righteous dead are offered in the Synagogue in memory of these devoted martyrs.

The silver Worms Synagogue Medal was issued in 1984. It shows a view of the Synagogue and the Rashi chapel - 1034-1984 - Hebrew and German legends. The Worms Synagogue was built in 1034 and desecrated in 1615. In 1624 the building was restored and the Rashi Chapel was added by David Joshua Oppenheim. The entire building was destroyed during Kristallnacht but was rebuilt by the Germans in 1961.



THE KARAITES

Judaism, like Christianity and Islam, has developed throughout the years different ideas and beliefs by members of the Jewish communities who, at the time, were dissatisfied with the "status quo." In general this dissatisfaction could be traced to political and socioeconomic reasons, as well as to different religious beliefs. As a result, many Jewish sects appeared, preaching their beliefs and hoping to carry out the changes they felt were necessary.

Of all the Jewish sects that appeared during the long history of Judaism and they were many - none was able to have as serious an effect on the Jewish mainstream as the sect of Karaism. Karaism, whose adherents are called Karaites, strongly challenged the mainstream and, to some extent, threatened its existence, and was able at times to attract 40 percent of the whole Jewish population. Karaism is the only Jewish sect besides that of the Samaritans that still exists today.

Karaism is the original form of Judaism as prescribed by God in the Torah. Karaite Judaism rejects later additions to the Tanach (Jewish Bible) such as the Rabbinic Oral Law and places the ultimate responsibility of interpreting the Bible on each individual. Karaism does not reject Biblical interpretation but rather holds every interpretation up to the same objective scrutiny regardless of its source.

Their name is derived from the Hebrew word for "scripture" (mikra), and they were originally characterized by a form of asceticism and rigid adherence to the literal interpretation of biblical laws. They adopted some Essene practices such as total separation from gentiles and ablutions before entering the synagogue, and did not practice many of the most universally accepted customs of rabbinic Judaism such as the use of phylacteries (tefillin) in prayer, the prohibition of eating meat with milk and the celebration of the festival of Hanukkah. Inter-marriage with non-Karaite Jews is forbidden.

In contrast to the Thirteen Articles of Faith of Maimonides accepted by most Jews, the Karaites have instead a code of ten, one of which is the religious duty to know the language of the Bible. Modern Karaites have their own prayer book.

The founder of Karaism was Anan ben David, a prominent Jewish scholar in eighth century Babylonia. Influenced by Islamic scholarship, his achievement, paradoxically, was to inaugurate a new epoch in the history of orthodox rabbinic Judaism which was to culminate in the work of the great mediaeval Jewish scholars.

The Ananites, as his anti-rabbinic followers were called at first, included some of the greatest Jewish personalities of the day. They were renamed Karaites in the next century by Benjamin of Nahavend, and could have become a major force within Judaism had it not been for the counter-offensive led by Saadiya, the greatest of the Geonim (882-942). Thereafter Egypt was the chief center of oriental Karaism until it was weakened by the authority and reputation of Maimonides in the twelfth century.

Karaites spread to Byzantium and Asia Minor, and existed for a brief period in eleventh century Spain. From the twelfth century there were Karaites in Russia and Lithuania, where they were often treated more hospitably by the Christian host communities than the orthodox Jews.

In 1939 the Nazi authorities stipulated that Karaites were to be categorized as non-Jews, and there were some cases of Karaite collaboration with the Germans. Celebrated Karaite scholars include Judah Hadassi of Constantinople, 12th century author of a kind of Karaite encyclopedia and a number of hymns still printed in Karaite prayer books, and the colourful Russian writer and archaeologist Abraham Firkovitch (1786-1874).

Some Karaite women, especially the poor, were affected by their Muslim neighbors and wore amulets to keep away the evil eye and evil spirits. Until the first quarter of the 20th century, the poor among the Karaites depended a great deal on folk medicine. Karaites were well known for their cleanliness. Even the poor among them kept a clean house and especially a clean kitchen. Karaite synagogues did not carry on any social activities, but there were some educational activities such as teaching Hebrew and the faith. From time to time, there were lectures in the synagogue or in the center of any existing association. The majority of Karaites now live in Israel where they have their own religious courts. They are not permitted to marry Jews.

There are estimated to be 1500 Karaites in the United States, about 100 families in Istanbul, and about 12,000 in Israel, most of them living near the town of Ramleh. in Moshav Mazleah, Israel.



The Israelites in the Papal States

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Under the pontificate of Pope Pius VII, the Israelites were treated in the States of the Church as in all other civilized countries. This pope was full of humanity and did not change any of the ordinances that had been made during the time of the Kingdom of Italy. He applied himself to maintain the laws, such as Napoleon had enacted them.

Happy and free, the Israelites were almost the equals of their fellow-citizens, under the wise and paternal reign of this pope. When at the end of ten years his death, which happened in 1825, carried desolation among his subjects. They experienced a great change on the accession of Leo XII who abolished the existing laws and replaced them by those that had been in force in the states of the Church before the French invasion. He re-established the Inquisition, and restored the old bulls (laws) to their former vigor.

The Israelites particularly felt the weight of this oppression. They were forbidden to have houses of their own, and those that owned them were obliged to sell them to Christians. Particular streets were assigned to them. These streets are generally crooked, dirty, and neglected, and compose, what is called, the *Ghetto*. This quarter, moreover, is encumbered by a growing population, and the Jews not being able to extend themselves beyond these limits in any manner, are obliged always to content themselves in this narrow space, even to the prejudice of the public health. To deprive the ghetto of all communication with the other streets, it has been furnished with a great many gates, which are shut every evening after sunset. But the principal gate has a small wicket, which is left open until eight o'clock at night. A porter, imposed on the Israelites, and paid by the Israelites, shuts it also at this hour, and they are abandoned to themselves in their civil prison. If during the night an important affair calls one of them to another quarter of the town, he cannot have the door opened but by gaining the favor of the porter.

No Christian servant can pass the night under the roof of an Israelite, and even on Friday evening, at the hour of closing the gates, Christians cannot remain longer in the ghetto. Any infraction of this rule is rigorously punished, although the judges know very well that the Israelites are forbidden to touch fire on Saturday. The serving-man or woman who is found in the ghetto on Friday evening or Saturday, undergoes a long and painful imprisonment, and the Israelite at whose house the guilty one is

found has to pay a fine of 300 scudi, about 1600 francs, which is extorted from the poor as well as the rich.

An Israelite cannot in accordance with these edicts, travel from one place to the other without being furnished, not only with a lawful passport, but with a printed card which is given him by the Inquisition, without subjecting himself to punishment. The traveler at each place where he stops, must have this sheet examined at once by the inquisitor and to repair immediately to the ghetto of the place. On his return, he must present himself in person before the inquisitor and return him his passport. The violator of this rule is invariably condemned to a fine of 300 scudi, and if he cannot pay this, to six months' imprisonment.

An Israelite cannot work nor carry on any retail trade out of the ghetto. An Israelite cannot be a soldier. Three days before Easter, or rather on Holy Wednesday at ten o'clock in the morning, the Inquisition warns the Israelites to retire into their ghetto, all the gates of which are then shut. No one can go out until the following Saturday when the clock strikes twelve, announcing to them the conclusion of an imprisonment of three days. Every Israelite who is discovered during this interval outside of the ghetto is immediately arrested and dragged to prison. The tribunal of the Inquisition alone is judge in such a case, and it is rare that the delinquent knows the cause of his arrest, the sentence of his condemnation only reveals to him his crime. The decree once pronounced, no appeal is admitted, and the condemned who seeks to defend himself only renders his case worse.

At Rome, under the same pontiff, the Inquisition restored to its vigor the ordinance that obliged a certain number of Israelites, about two hundred men and one hundred women, to report on Saturday to the *Bocca della Verita*, near the ghetto, to listen to a Dominican priest specially attached to that church. This preacher reviles the religion of the Jewish people, accuses their prophets of falsehoods, and exalts the Christian religion as the only one that can give salvation. He admonishes them to break through the veil of darkness; his voice, he says, is that of God, he is sent to them from heaven to give them light, and to save their souls, etc.

Before the Israelites of both sexes repair to the designated church, the images of the saints are covered with crape, and when the sermon is concluded the church is filled with incense to destroy the reputed profanation caused by their presence. For every Israelite that is absent at the fixed hour, the community pays 30 *baïoques*, or 5 francs 36 centimes, to the Inquisition.

At Rome the Israelites have to bear considerable charges; they pay, for example, 500 scudi yearly to the senate, and 1000 to the catechumens. all the abuses of olden times have been re-established. Among others, the

Israelites are obliged every year, the first day of the Carnival, to send to the Holy Father a deputation to ask him formally for permission to remain another year in the country. Thus the degrees of Leo XII have given to the social condition of the Israelites a retrograde movement; and we must not expect, that for some time, they will occupy a better position in the States of the Church, although a less bigoted spirit has been displayed under the following pontiff

The reigning pope, Gregory XVI, received the tiara the 2nd of February, 1831. The same day the installation of the new pontiff gave rise to troubles in the states of the Church. The interference of the Austrian troops soon put down the tumult and restored peace. The Christian population had every where taken away the gates of the existing ghettos, annulled the edicts and rules concerning the Israelites, and proclaimed civil liberty; but all this was too intimately connected with an ephemeral revolt to last a long time.

The pope, supported by Austria and afterwards by France, soon had the reins of the state strengthened in his hands, and he immediately restored not only the political statutes, but the old ordinances concerning the Israelites. But let us acknowledge the mildness of the pope in the application of these ordinances.

In reality the gates of the ghettos have not been re-established, and the Israelites are subjected to a more humane administration; yet they depend very much on the local inquisitor, for he has full power over those placed under his control, and can make them feel more or less the weight of oppression. As to the rule which obliges travelers to furnish themselves with a second passport, it is executed daily with the greatest strictness. There exists also a yet more deplorable custom, which can be traced back to olden times. If a servant or a Christian nurse declares to have baptized with her own hand an Israelitish child, the Inquisition tears it immediately from its parents, and gives it to the Church, no reclamation being allowed; even an inventory of the fortune of the parents is made to secure to the infant its patrimony.

It is easy to see to what heart-burnings and to what cruel vexations families are exposed by such a custom. The natural goodness, and the benevolence generally found among the inhabitants of the Roman states, can alone dissipate the terrors that such an ordinance would necessarily have inspired if even it had been but seldom enforced. The sentiments of humanity that are daily becoming more and more universal, are the only consolations of these unfortunate communities, who have become accustomed to their fate. But they have received some amelioration in their condition in the course of the year 1839.

The community of Ancona suffered very much from the re-establishment of the ancient decrees. Before the publication of the edict of Leo XII the rich families retired to the territory of Austria or Tuscany. The community was thus impoverished and its revenues fell off considerable every year, while the taxes were continually augmented. The community actually numbers about one thousand individuals, of which eight hundred are at their charge, and one hundred more are obliged to have assistance to support a miserable existence. Some good commercial houses are found there which have an extensive correspondence with foreign countries. Some other Israelites carry on retail business, or live from brokerage without being in every case authorized by government; others are bookbinders.

Seven deputies are at the head of the administration, three among them are charged with the chief concerns of the community. Every three years there is a new election. The members of the community pay a tax according to their means, and those engaged in business according to the importance and the revenues of their commerce. The tax in general amounts to a considerable sum, as they are subject to numerous exactions, frequently useless and illegal. Thus, for example, the Israelite that is baptized receives from the government 20 scudi, which the community is obliged to pay. Is it to be believed that there are some miserable beings, who, to extort large sums, threaten to be baptized. As to the administration, it is altogether without control; it never renders any accounts, and disposes at will of the receipts.

About once every year, a person sent from Jerusalem goes begging for the poor of the Holy Land, and according to the effect produced by his eloquence or by his person, he receives generally 300 or 400 scudi, which are raised among all the members of the community. They can marry without any obstacle; even if immediately after the wedding the married pair should be in want of assistance. The community have a Reader very badly paid, a Grand Rabbi and two under Rabbis, who receive salaries equally inconsiderable. There are no public schools, nor houses for education. The young Israelites receive at most private lessons, which are generally given by the ladies; thus the moral of youth is completely neglected. The rich only can give their children a more liberal education.

Some masters are found who possess higher talents; and one in particular who is distinguished in commercial branches, who was sometimes called on to give lessons to young Christians. But some time ago the inquisitor was informed of it, he summoned the professor before his tribunal, and forbade him, under a fine of 300 scudi, or an imprisonment that should be equivalent, to give lessons to Christians in future.

There are no hospitals, but only a committee who assist unfortunate persons in their last moments. The burying-ground is in the neighboring town, which belongs to it, and has no wall to enclose it. To bury a dead person, permission is obliged to be obtained from the police, who never refuse it.

The community has three different Synagogues, called scuole, or schools. The Synagogues of the German and Italian forms are found in the same house as every where else in Italy; the latter occupies the lower story. That of the Spanish Jews is outside of the ghetto, near a church. Some years ago the clergy complained at the court of Rome of such a neighborhoods, but the complaint was dismissed, because the Synagogue was of an older date than the church. The Synagogues are much frequented, but the devotion is purely exterior. On Sabbaths and the feast-days the stores are shut, and in general all public affairs are interdicted. The deputies, supported by the inquisitors, exact rigorously the observance of this law. Yet, notwithstanding, a great many dispense with it, less from a spirit of conviction, but because they find it inconvenient.

The closest numismatic connection to the above are two coins used in the Papal states in 1848 and 1851. They are a Baiocco and one half Baiocco denomination and were used by Jews and non-Jews in the Papal States in commerce. The obverse side shows ornaments connected with the Pope and the shield of the Vatican.



Manchuria Memories

By Riva Moiseef Bassin

This story begins in the early 1900s in Manchuria, a dominion of China situated on the Yellow Sea and bounded on the north and east by Siberia and Mongolia. On the border where Manchuria meets its neighboring countries was a small village, also called Manchuria, which was populated by some 30,000 Chinese and Mongolian peasants. It was in this remote, isolated haven that my parents and a handful of other Russian Jewish families sought refuge from the tyranny and brutal anti-Semitism of Czar Nikolai. And it was there that this tiny *kehillah* (community) established a fertile island of *Yiddishkeit* amidst a surging foreign sea.

Despite the hardships we endured in a climate where winter temperatures often plunged to forty degrees below zero, our community flourished. The remoteness of our village worked to our advantage: the ruling authorities, continually occupied with internal strife, could not be bothered with insignificant outlying towns, and we were therefore free at last to lead the lives we chose without governmental interference.

The *kehillah* built a shul, a school and a mikveh, established a *chevrah kadish* (burial society), opened a kosher abattoir and grocery, and religious communal life proceeded in a manner theretofore unknown.

From an economic standpoint, as well, our destination was wisely chosen. My father, a fur merchant, now had ready access to the vast fur markets of Mongolia, and his business thrived. At the time, Russia and China were jointly and simultaneously constructing the K.V.G.D. - the Great East Chinese Railway - stretching from Siberia all the way to Dairen, a port city on the coast of China near Japan. Situated at the point of intersection of the two railway lines, Manchuria had a distinct commercial advantage.

This strategic location provided another, even greater advantage. A seemingly endless tide of World War I refugees and victims of the Bolshevik Revolution - en route to America, Palestine, or wherever - flowed through our village. *Gemillas chessed* (acting kindly) was a way of life for the Jews of Manchuria, who opened their doors and their hearts to the homeless. Our house was a way station for countless strangers, overnight guests, close and distant relatives, some of whom became, for varying periods, members of our family. A number of refugees, including many White Russian gentiles, remained in Manchuria, but most traveled on, often with packets of money, clothing and food pressed upon them by members of the *kehillah* to ease their passage.

Our anxiousness to help the war refugees was a reflection of Mama's philanthropic *middos* (character traits). But our ability to accommodate large numbers of them for extended periods was a function of the spaciousness of our house. The family homestead was comprised of a very large residence, and a sizeable farm, where we raised vegetable crops, dairy cows and poultry. Both farm and household help were abundant: Our Chinese peasant neighbors were for the most part poor farmers who eagerly accepted employment in our home in exchange for food or modest wages.

Our house was not like anything one might imagine to have existed at the turn of the century, and certainly not in that remote part of the world. Papa's frequent business trips abroad and his commercial ties with the outside world enabled us to furnish our home in a grand style. Floor-to-ceiling mirrors imported from Belgium, carpets, draperies and chandeliers graced our parlor. How these fragile items survived their journey intact, I will never know. Nor will I know how Papa achieved the near-miraculous engineering feat of providing our house with indoor plumbing!

A massive table stood in our dining room and it was from this spot that Papa would "hold court" each morning. As *Predsdatel* (official representative) of the *kehillah* and an active member of the town council, school and shul committees, Papa was appointed deputy mayor of Manchuria (the mayor was Chinese) and thus he bore a tremendous sense of responsibility towards the villagers. All would seek his advice and counsel on subjects ranging from legal matters to family problems. Only halachic (Jewish legal) decisions were outside his purview: That was Rav Zhuravell's domain. From early morning they lined up in our front hall: The Jews, the Russian gentiles, even the Chinese peasants, awaiting their turn at the table.

While Papa ruled over the dining room, Mama reigned supreme in the kitchen, in the center of which stood a massive, wood-burning brick oven. Though Mama rarely had to soil her hands with housework, she did love to bake and of course she had to manage the household help. This was not a simple chore as the size of our "extended family" plus numerous and frequent guests made it necessary for food preparation to be undertaken on the scale of a small factory.

In the summer and fall, when produce was plentiful, enormous vats and jars were filled with fruit preserves and pickled vegetable and stored in the cellar, along with vast quantities of potatoes, onions, carrots, which we buried in the earthen floor, all this in preparation for the long winter ahead. We had a separate cellar exclusively for Pesach utensils. *Pesachdik* vegetables went directly from the soil of the fields into the soil of the

Pesach cellar. A subterranean cold-storage room, dug deep in the permafrost and packed with cakes of ice, was our summer refrigerator for dairy products: Home-made cheese, cream, butter and milk.

At the onset of winter, the *shochet* (ritual slaughterer) would make a "house call" and *shecht* fowl by the score -- chickens, turkeys, geese, ducks - enough for the entire winter. The women would then clean and *kasher* (kosherize) the poultry and store it in the outdoor meat shed, where nature took over. In no time at all, the shed became one huge walk-in meat freezer.

The day after Purim, the Pesach "factory" went into full operation. The school basement, sealed during the rest of the year, was equipped with an oven and was devoted solely to matzah-baking. The *shmurah matzos* baked by the townsfolk were loaded onto the special Pesach wagon, driven by a Jew and used exclusively for matzah-delivery. Back at home, the Pesach kitchen was a hive of activity. Jewish workers decanted home-made wine from huge glass bottles into smaller, individual ones, while the Chinese scrubbed and polished every inch of the house. We hung Pesach draperies of white hand-embroidered cloth and laid white Pesach rugs, made from the white cotton sacking in which the Pesach *matzah mehl* (matzah meal) was delivered. Even the doormats were changed so that not a mote of *chametz* could cross our doorstep.

Whether it was for Yom Tov or Shabbes, winter or summer, the quantities of food prepared far exceeded the needs of even our "extended family." When all the cooking was done, our Chinese *boyka* (Russian parlance for "errand boy"), nicknamed Ivan, would don his white tunic and, laden with baskets of culinary delights, deliver food to certain needy families. That was Mama's way: To give with an open hand.

There were several factors which contributed to the beauty of *Shabbes* and *Yom Tov* in Manchuria. The most important element was the pure joy of being able to observe the mitzvos without fear. For this reason, I think, we celebrated the *Yomim Tovim* (Festivals) with tremendous *hislachavus* (enthusiasm), perhaps to compensate for the years of religious persecution suffered at the hands of the Russians. Another factor was the intense bond my family always had with tradition and heritage. We did not change our "Old Country" ways to suit the environment but rather our environment and neighbors adapted to us and our *minhagim* (customs). The Chinese not only became accustomed to our holidays, but in many cases played an active role in their observance.

No one, for example, had to make his way home on foot after a long Yom Kippur fast: The Chinese would line up their horse-drawn carriages outside the shul to offer the weary Jews a ride. Before Pesach, the Chinese

carpenter, clad in a glistening white tunic and with his tool kit over his shoulder, would walk through the streets crying, "Pesach, Pesach" -- it was his job to plane down our kitchen work tables, removing the layers of *chametz* and exposing a new surface (which we covered in any case). On Shavuot eve, Chinese farmers went from door to door with wagon loads of newly-cut grass with which we virtually carpeted the house.

No doubt the abundance of help relieved many burdens, but it is unlikely that we would have been otherwise able to welcome so many into our home. The laundry and linens alone represented a mountainous job. The washerwoman came to our home twice a week. She would spend the entire day, from dawn to dusk, scrubbing by hand in the laundry shed and hanging all the clothes and linens on the washlines. But in a sub-zero climate, as one might expect, the wash quickly froze. At the end of the day, she would stack the stiff, ice-laden laundry in baskets and bring it into the house. The fragrance of freshly-laundered, frozen linens melting by the fireside still lingers in my memory and brings tears of nostalgia to my eyes. Two days later, when the wash had completely defrosted and partially dried, she would return to do the ironing.

Frozen laundry was a signal to the children that Chanukah was not far off. Chanukah was a joyous time of year for us. By December, winter held Manchuria in its icy grip; we were literally snowbound. Night fell at 3:00 p.m. and by 4:00 we were all warmly ensconced around the samovar, with hot drinks and *latkes*. Every year, Papa would carefully hollow out eight potatoes and fill the hollows with olive oil from Palestine, placing a wick in each. Though we could easily acquire a finer menorah, maintaining old family traditions was more important. Reciting the brachos, (blessings) Papa would proudly display his primitive creation on the window sill, to fulfill the obligation of "publicizing the miracle." Family and guests all joined in for the traditional singing of Psalms that follows the candle lighting ceremony; the children played *dreidl* with hand carved wooden tops; Papa told us stories in Yiddish 'til the wee hours of the night; and we all believed this contented life would last forever.

Our dreams were abruptly shattered when Japan invaded Manchuria in the 1930s, and we had our first taste of oppression. The *kehillah* was forced to move on. My family resettled in Harbin, a comparatively large Chinese metropolis, two days' journey by train from Manchuria. The Jewish community of Harbin was quite substantial, numbering around 100,000, and enjoyed total freedom and security. There existed every conceivable Jewish social and religious service, including shuls and yeshivos, an old-age home, a Jewish hospital, a Jewish cemetery, and a "soup kitchen" which was open to the needy public at large and whose sign proudly proclaimed

its purpose. *Die Yiddishe Biliger Umziste Kuch*. Many of the 700,000 Chinese benefited regularly from this service.

But the idyll that was Jewish Harbin was not destined to last. Though unscathed by the ravages of World War II, the Jews of Harbin saw the handwriting on the wall when Mao began his Long March. In 1950, along with 40 other young couples, my husband and I made our way to Eretz Yisrael to settle down and raise a family of our own.

A happy footnote to this story is the fact that the Chinese graciously allowed the Jewish communities to resell their properties to the local inhabitants and to transfer the funds out of China. It was with their share of these funds that the Association of Immigrants from China in Israel built a beautiful shul in "Shikun Shanghai" near Tel Aviv.

There are so many dear friends and relatives that are not mentioned here, some who have sadly passed on to the Next World, *zichronam livrachah*, others with whom we still maintain close ties, and others in distant lands with whom we have lost touch over the years. All live on in my heart, but this story is my story: the memories of a small Jewish child of Manchuria.

The illustration is of a Manchuria Province 20C copper coin struck in 1908, about the time that the Jewish families sought refuge from Russian tyranny.



ABOUT THE YIDDISH LANGUAGE

Yiddish has been for a thousand years the *Mama Loshen*-the spoken language of most Jews. Yiddish is one of the Germanic languages and the principal language of Jews, who are native to, or who have antecedents in, eastern and central Europe. Yiddish is written in Hebrew characters some of them used differently than for writing Hebrew. Yiddish, meaning "Jewish", arose between the 9th and 12th centuries in southwestern Germany as an adaptation of Middle High German dialects to the special needs of Jews.

To the original German were added those Hebrew words that pertained to Jewish religious life. Later, when the bulk of European Jewry moved eastward into areas occupied predominantly by Slavic-speaking peoples, some Slavic influences were acquired. The vocabulary of the Yiddish spoken in eastern Europe during recent times comprised about 85 percent German, 10 percent Hebrew, and 5 percent Slavic, with traces of Romanian, French, and other elements.

Many English words and phrases entered Yiddish, becoming an integral part of the language as it is spoken in the U.S. and other English-speaking countries. Apart from vocabulary changes, modern Yiddish differs from modern German mainly in the simplification of inflections and syntax, the acquisition of a few grammatical traits influenced by Slavic speech, and its looser pronunciation of Germanic words. Yiddish pronunciation is also significantly influenced by Slavic languages. In its word formation and use of auxiliary verbs, Yiddish is similar to English, which also is a Germanic language with a simplified grammar and a variously enriched vocabulary.

Yiddish exists in two groups of dialects, one of which is further subdivided. The western dialect, with few speakers, is centered in German-speaking areas of western Europe. The more widely distributed eastern group has a northeastern branch and a southern branch. The northeastern branch includes the Yiddish spoken in the Baltic countries and in the northwestern areas of Russia, and by Jewish immigrants or descendants from those areas. The southern branch, which has central and southeastern subgroups-includes the dialects spoken in Poland, Romania, and Ukraine.

Yiddish is a highly plastic and assimilative language, rich in idioms, and possessing remarkable freshness, pithiness, and pungency. Since it was spoken by ordinary people rather than by scholars, its vocabulary is weak in abstractions. By the same token it has few items descriptive of nature, with which the Jews of eastern Europe had relatively little contact, and a wealth of words and expressions descriptive of character and of relations among people. It makes liberal use of diminutives and terms of endearment and

exhibits a variety of expletives. The use of proverbs and proverbial expressions is considerable. These qualities and usages give Yiddish a uniquely warm and personal flavor.

In the early years of the 20th century Yiddish was spoken by an estimated 11 million people living mainly in eastern Europe and the U.S. Yiddish became the language of literature, theatre, songs, folklore, newspapers and humor. Sholem Aleichem, I.L. Peretz and Isaac Bashevis Singer are just a few of those whose contributions are acknowledged worldwide. The use of the language has been declining since then. The initial cause was the extermination of the Jewish communities in Poland and other eastern European countries during World War II. An important factor that also contributed to the decline in usage was the adaptation by Jews to the languages predominant in the United States and in the Soviet Union. In 1984, however, a Russian-Yiddish dictionary containing essays on etymology and grammar was published in the USSR. Since then a few novels by Russian Jews have been written in Yiddish.

In Israel the Hebrew language is predominant, and Yiddish is a second language, cultivated largely by members of the older generation who have an eastern European background. Only a few modern Israeli poets write in Yiddish. In an effort to ensure its preservation, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem teaches Yiddish, as do certain American schools and colleges. The YIVO Institute for Jewish Research, founded in Poland at the turn of the century and moved to New York City in 1940, includes the study of the development of the Yiddish language as part of its effort to preserve the history of Eastern European shtetl, or village, culture.

The impressive design of the medal expresses the essence of Yiddish culture, uniting the past with the present. On the face of the medal appear the words *Yiddish* and *Mama Loshen*. Two Jews on top of the earth represent the universality of Yiddish culture. On the reverse, a Kletzner musician floats above a Jewish village in the Diaspora and in Israel, above him the words "*Yiddle Mitn Fiddle - A Jew with a violin*."



YEMENI JEWRY

The Yemenite Jew is one of the ancient Israeli tribes. Under the rule of the Moslems they suffered much hardship and persecution. Yemeni Jews were traditionally prevented from owning land and therefore sought employment in commerce and trade. They were renowned for their skills as silversmiths and jewelry-makers. During the Ottoman period, it became mandatory for Jewish men to grow sidelocks, and Jews were prohibited from wearing bright colors, building homes above a certain height, carrying weapons or even riding a donkey or horse.

There was a mass exodus of Yemeni Jews in 1882. "I will rise as a date palm" (Song of Songs 7:8) was foreseen by the great Yemeni Rabbi Shalom Shavazi. The 1882 Yemeni Jewish immigrants and those that followed worked on the land with other pioneers in building the country. When the State of Israel was established, many more exiled Yemeni Jews flocked to Israel. The new immigrants, with those already in Israel, totaled over 100,000 people. The Yemenites are regarded as a hard working and self supporting people and have contributed greatly to Israeli culture.

In 1905 a new law required Jewish orphans under the age of thirteen to be converted to Islam. In 1929 emigration to Palestine was outlawed, but a steady trickle of Jews continued to leave the country. Before the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948, some 16,000 Jews managed to emigrate to Palestine. Between June 1949 and July 1950, a further 43,000 Yemeni Jews were airlifted to Israel in an operation dubbed 'Operation Magic Carpet'.

In May 1949, when the Imam of Yemen agreed to let 45,000 of the 46,000 Jews in his country leave, Israeli transport planes flew them "home" in Operation Magic Carpet. The Yemenite Jews, mostly children, were brought to Israel on some 380 flights. This was one of the most wonderful and complex immigration operations the state has ever known. British and American planes airlifted the Jews from Aden, the capital of Yemen, when they reached the city from all over Yemen after extremely dangerous and risky journeys. The operation was secret and was released to the media only several months after its completion.

Some 250,000 Jews who arrived that year alone were placed in military barracks and tent camps, and were later moved to *ma'abarot* (transit camps). The state nearly collapsed under the burden. Calculations made that year showed that the state needed some \$3,000 for the absorption of each immigrant, which meant that the state required about 750 million for the whole campaign; the entire state budget was less than that. Yet, despite everything, the young state was more than willing to do

all that was necessary to absorb the immigrants, believing that this was the reason for its establishment in the first place.

According to official figures, 2,000 more Yemeni Jews arrived in Israel after 1952. After the 1962 revolution in North Yemen, Jews were forbidden to leave that country, though several thousand Aden Jews in the South managed to leave with the British when they relinquished control of the Aden Protectorate in the mid-1960s, following violent anti-British and anti-Jewish riots.

Suspensions of Israel and Zionism also led to further restrictions, and contacts with foreign visitors, especially Jews, were strictly forbidden. Members of the Jewish community carried distinctive identity papers and lived under a permanent nightly curfew.

In 1986 Israeli officials revealed that secret diplomacy was being pursued to enable the last Jews in Yemen to emigrate, and shortly afterwards the Yemeni government lifted restrictions on Jewish emigration though it remained officially opposed to Jews traveling to Israel.

A delegation of Jewish leaders from the London-based Maimonides Foundation visited Yemen in October 1998. They visited the Jewish community in Raydah and met with senior figures in local and national government. During the last two years, the Yemeni government has facilitated the reconstruction of a Jewish school, which was destroyed by Islamists in 1992, and a *mikveh* (ritual bath) with the help of foreign funds.

The Middle East peace process and the urgent need to boost the Yemeni economy have resulted in a significant decline in the government's hostility towards Israel and in official expressions of anti-Semitism. Yemen has sought to strengthen ties with the West and to present a more moderate image in order to acquire urgently needed foreign aid.

The 1982 Hanukka coin features A hanukka lamp from Yemen. The reverse shows an ancient stone Yemen hanukka lamp with the words "I will rise as a date palm" written in old Yemeni scrip.



Emma Lazarus & Statue of Liberty

By Henry Weinrib

*"Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe
free, The wretched refuse of your teeming
shore. Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost
to me, I lift my lamp beside the golden door!"*

What is more American than the Statue of Liberty, you say. The immortal words of Emma Lazarus which are fastened to the base of the statue give it its eternal message. So you may say, but the reality of the Statue and the words of Emma Lazarus are not quite what we popularly believe.

The Statue of Liberty was a project totally conceived by the French people as a token of their admiration of the American democratic way of life. The poem of Emma Lazarus was a later composition that was only indirectly related to the Statue of Liberty. The Statue was conceived by French intellectuals who had envied the America style of life. Whereas America had won its liberty from Britain, France had seen revolutions that produced corrupt governments and despots. One night a man named Edouard Rene Lefebvre di Laboulaye gave a large dinner party in his home. He was a politician, historian, and a law professor who envied the American democracy that assured liberty and equal rights to all. He remarked that since the individuals of France and America had much in common, it would only be appropriate for the citizens of France to give them a monument as a token of their common bond. This would show the rulers of France the desires of the French people.

One of his guests was Frederic Auguste Bartholdi, a sculptor. He listened enraptured to di Laboulaye's words and they entered Bartholdi's heart and took root. The Statue of Liberty came to fruition as a result of Bartholdi inspiration. But how it came to be is a story which is beyond the scope of this article.

Emma Lazarus was born on July 22, 1849 to Moses and Hettie Lazarus. Moses traced his ancestry back to the Spanish Sefardim that had come to America generations earlier. Hettie's family were Ashkanizi, and came to the shores of America in the 1700's. Moses was a wealthy man who had made a fortune in sugar refining. The family, which included sisters, Josephine, Sarah, Mary, Emma, Agnes and Annie and one son, Eleazer Frank lived in an upper class neighborhood in New York City.

The children receive an extensive education beyond that which was average for that period. They studied literature, arithmetic, history geography, music and languages. Emma became fluent in French, German, and Italian. She took to literature and poetry and began writing poems at an early age. She also spent much time studying the writings of the philosophers of the time, especially Ralph Waldo Emerson. Her father was much impressed by Emma's poems and took a collection of 35 poems and had them published privately to be given out to the family.

It was much later that her parents were invited to a dinner party where Ralph Waldo Emerson was a guest. Emma came along and was thrilled to meet her idol. She told Emerson that she was a poet, and he asked to see some of her poems. She sent him copies of her poems signed and dated February 12, 1868. She was a mere nineteen years old at the time. Emerson was impressed with her poems and began a correspondence with her that lasted many years. He gave her advice and criticism about her poems and her style.

It was not until one summer that her family vacationed in Newport, Rhode Island that Emma found Jewish history fascinating. The colony of Rhode Island was the second colony to open its doors to Jews (1658). Here was a synagogue that was built in 1763. George Washington came to visit and later wrote a letter to the congregation. Emma was impressed with the Jewish American history and wrote a poem entitled, "In the Jewish Synagogue at Newport".

*Here, where the noises of the busy town,
The ocean's plunge and roar can enter not,
We stand and gaze around with tearful awe,
And muse upon the consecrated spot.*

*Nathless the sacred shrine is holy yet,
With its lone floors where reverent feet once
trod. Take off your shoes as by the burning
bush, Before the mystery of death and God.*

(First and last stanza only)

In 1874, Emma published a novel, "Alide" which was based on the life of the German poet Goethe. It was a fictional work which portrayed a poet who had a love affair with a simple girl. It ends with the parting of the lovers since a poet must be free to pursue his love of poetry and art, perhaps telling us a bit of her inner feelings and thoughts.

She kept a constant correspondence with Emerson sending him copies of her works. Emerson himself collected works from many poets and published them in a book called "Parnassus". Emma bought a copy of

Emerson's new book and was shocked and dismayed to the point of depression when she saw that her own works were not among those which Emerson chose to publish. She wrote a letter to him telling him of her hurt feelings that she was not represented in his new published collection.

Two years later, Emerson replied by inviting her to visit him at his home in Concord. Emerson was at the time 75 and had famous neighbors, Nathaniel Hawthorn and Louisa May Alcott. She met William Channing, who besides being a poet, was the biographer of Henry David Thoreau, who died several years earlier. The now famous Walden Pond was adjacent to the property of Emerson as was Thoreau's famous cabin.

Upon returning from this most experiential vacation, she began more soul searching regarding her role as a poet. She did not consider herself a "Jewish" poetess, yet her Jewish heritage was part of her being.

At the same time, immigration to the United States was increasing. Jews were being killed and forcibly removed from their homes in the distant lands of Russia, Romania and Poland. The scourge of anti-Semitism was sweeping Eastern Europe. Many thousands of Jews were uprooted and forced to flee. Many abandoned their family ties and came to America. America in the 1880's was a difficult place to earn a living. The immigrants came on boats packed with refugees. Passengers huddled together in the steerage like cattle, food and water were sparse. Many became ill and some died. The surge of refugees swamped all housing stations including Castle Garden and Ward's Island.

The authorities were overwhelmed and baffled. Committees were organized to help these poor people who came to escape death and uncertainty in the new land. One of Emma's acquaintances, Dr G. Gottheil, was active with the relief organization. He brought her together with some other women to see first hand the situation first hand. Emma led a sheltered life of a wealthy aristocrat. She was shocked and moved to see the state of these poor immigrants who lacked all. She was aroused to write a poem called "The Banner of the Jew."

*WAKE, Israel, wake! Recall to-day
The glorious Maccabean rage, The sire
heroic, hoary-gray, His five-fold lion-
lineage: The Wise, the Elect, the Help-of-
God, The Burst-of-Spring, the Avenging Rod
A rag, a mock at first—erelong,
When men have bled and women wept,
To guard its precious folds from wrong,
Even they who shrunk, even they who slept,*

*Shall leap to bless it, and to save.
Strike! for the brave revere the brave!*

(First and last stanza only)

After that day, Emma felt a strong connection to those people who were groping and struggling with their lives, torn asunder from their homes and forced to flee leaving their land and possessions behind. Now formally intellectual and successful people totally reduced to fear and hunger. She helped the refugees with money and clothing. She said "*...I have no thought, no passion, no desire, save for my own people.*"

Although she belonged to the cream of the wealthy aristocracy, she would often visit the immigrants' camp on Ward's Island. She felt a strong sense of sympathy toward her "brothers and sisters". She joined committee after committee to arrange for practical and useful help for them.

Her friend, Philip Cowen of the American Hebrew asked her to write a poem for the new Jewish year. Occupied with the refugee work and influenced by it, she wrote "'The New Year, Rosh Hashanah, 5643" (1882)

*High above flood and fire ye held the
scroll, Out of the depths ye published still
the Word. No bodily pang had power to
swerve your soul: Ye, in a cynic age of
crumbling faiths, Lived to bear witness to
the living Lord, Or died a thousand deaths.*

*In two divided streams the exiles part,
One rolling homeward to its ancient source,
One rushing sunward with fresh will, new
heart. By each truth is spread, the law
unfurled, Each separate soul contains the
nation's force, And both embrace the world.*

*Kindle the silver candle's seven rays,
Offer the first fruits of the
clustered bowers, The garnered spoil of
bees. With prayer and praise
Rejoice that once more tried, once more we
prove How strength of supreme suffering
still is ours. For Truth and Law and Love.*

(Last three stanzas)

In 1883, Emma took a break and sailed to Europe to rest and be inspired. Yet the French sculptor, Frederic Auguste Bartholdi was completing his magnificent work, to be presented to the people of the

United States. Yet, the American government was cool to the idea. An American committee was set up to provide a place for the triumphant statue. Funds were needed to build a pedestal for the statue.

A fund-raising exhibition and auction were set up. Many great writers and artists submitted their works to be auctioned. The list of writers included Mark Twain, Walt Whitman and John Burroughs. Emma was approached when she returned from her European trip to donate a poem. She considered the statue as holding out her torch to the Russian refugees, who were so lost and frightened, yet full of hope. This is the sonnet called "The New Colossus."

*Not like the brazen giant of Greek fame,
With conquering limbs astride from land to
land; Here at our sea-washed, sunset gates
shall stand A mighty woman with a torch,
whose flame Is the imprisoned lightning,
and her name Mother of Exiles. From her
beacon-hand Glows world-wide welcome;
her mild eyes command The air-bridged
harbor that twin cities frame.*

*"Keep, ancient lands, your storied pomp!"
cries she With silent lips. "Give me your
tired, your poor, Your huddled masses
yearning to breathe free, The wretched
refuse of your teeming shore. Send these, the
homeless, tempest-tost to me, I lift my lamp
beside the golden door!"*

Written in aid of Bartholdi Pedestal Fund 1883

The collection of writings was sold for \$1,500 which was enough to see the pedestal through its completion. Emma received an unexpected letter from James Russell Lowell who said, "I like your sonnet about the Statue much better than I like the Statue itself."

The matter does not end here. A woman named Georgina Schuyler was a patroness of the arts. She was browsing in a used book store in New York in 1903 when she came across the portfolio containing "The New Colossus." She was touched by the words and showed it to her friends. It was she that arranged to have the last five lines of the sonnet engraved on a plaque. The plaque was place inside the second story of the statue's pedestal with no ceremony or fanfare. It was on that unrecorded date that the Statue of Liberty was given its meaning:

EMMA LAZARUS MEDAL
THE MEDALLIC HISTORY OF THE JEWS OF AMERICA
BY KAREN WORTH

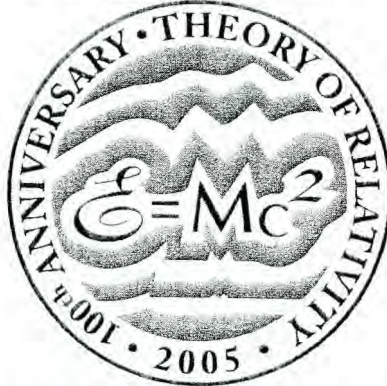


EMMA LAZARUS MEDAL
JEWISH AMERICAN HALL OF FAME
BY GERTA RIES WIENER



$$E=MC^2$$

The 100th anniversary of the publication of Einstein's equation $E=mc^2$ is commemorated on the 2005 token issued by the American Israel Numismatic Association, designed by Mel Wacks.



Young 26 year old Albert Einstein was an examiner at the Swiss patent office in Bern, in 1905, when he published a number of important papers that forever changed man's view of the universe. The first article was "A New Determination of Molecular Dimensions," that won him a PH.D. from the University of Zurich. Next was "On the Motion of Small Particles Suspended in a Stationary Liquid According to the Molecular Kinetic Theory of Induction," that provided a theoretical explanation of Brownian motion (the random movement of microscopic particles suspended in a liquid or gas).

In "On a Heuristic Viewpoint Concerning the Production and Transformation of Light," Einstein postulated that light is composed of individual quanta (later called photons) that, in addition to wavelike behavior, demonstrate certain properties unique to particles. This provided an explanation for the emission of electrons from some solids when struck by light, called the photoelectric effect.

Einstein's Theory of Relativity, "On the Electrodynamics of Moving Bodies," had its beginnings in an essay he wrote at the age of 16. The theory held that if, for all frames of reference, the speed of light is constant and if all natural laws are the same, then both time and motion are found to be relative to the observer. A mathematical footnote in "Does the Inertia of a Body Depend upon its Energy Content?" established the equivalence of mass and energy, according to which the energy E of a quantity of matter, with mass m , is equal to the product of the mass and the square of the velocity of light, c . This relationship is expressed in the equation $E=mc^2$.

PROFILE OF AINA'S "MR. NUMISMATIST"

Edward Janis was born in the Bronx, New York on July 12, 1916 to Abraham and Anna Janis. He attended Dewitt Clinton High School, CCNY College and New York State University where he received his Degree in Business Administration. Edward married Hilda at the Temple Zion in the Bronx on August 10, 1941. Working at Douglas Aircraft, he was transferred to California three years later. He and Hilda became the parents to a daughter named Phyllis on March 31, 1946. The Janis family resided in Manhattan, New York for over forty years. It was during this time that "Eddie", his nickname that we all knew him by, worked as a real estate mortgage broker where he developed properties all over the United States. Phyllis still resides in Manhattan, with her husband Kenny, where she works as a personal shopper. They have two children, Marc and Ariane.

Simultaneously, Eddie enjoyed a variety of hobbies. In addition to his favorite, coin collecting, his interests included fishing and cooking. Eddie was an active member of numerous numismatic organizations. He was very active in the American Israel Numismatic Association (AINA) where he was a member of the Board of Directors for many years. It was during this time that he authored a column, entitled the "Aleph Beth Page", that appeared in each issue of The Shekel magazine wherein he would answer a numismatic question that someone had written and submitted to him. It seemed that no matter the question, Eddie always knew the answer.

Eddie began collecting in 1948 with scarce-date nickels, dimes and quarters, by going through a few hundred dollars worth of change each week. By 1950, after accumulating a roll of 1921 dimes, including four of the elusive 1916-D issue and a worn 1901-S Barber quarter, Eddie decided that there must be more to numismatics overall and began to join various clubs, the first being the Bronx Coin Club, to find out what coin collecting was all about. Eddie changed his collecting habits by discontinuing going through change to concentrating on Large cents as a specialty. Changing his specialty again, he began to collect early U.S. gold eagles where he soon gained recognition as the outstanding authority on Early Eagles of

1795 to 1804, after discovering a new variety that had never been listed in the Coin Collectors Journal. By this time he had become well known throughout the entire numismatic hobby, where he now belonged to several numismatic organizations in addition to AINA. He served as president of both the Bronx Coin Club and Westchester County Coin Club, in addition to being a member of the Brooklyn Coin Club and the New York Numismatic Club.

Eddie was one of the founding members of AINA, along with Ed Schuman (the current editor of *The Shekel*), and the late Morris Bram and Professor Frankenhuis. He also helped found the Israel Numismatic Society of New York and the Westchester Israel Numismatic Society. In and around the New York City area, Eddie served as exhibit chairman and general chairman of numerous coin conventions. In addition to all of this, Eddie was also a forum speaker at many conventions and club meetings, speaking on one of his many collections and/or specialties of interest.

Personally speaking, I remember Eddie the most from the AINA Study Tours to Israel, in addition to many of the conventions I attended in New York City. The numismatic presence of Edward Janis has indeed been missed in the hobby. Hilda still resides in Manhattan along with her daughter, son-in-law and grandchildren.

Written by Donna J. Sims



Editor's Note

Donna has done an excellent job profiling my friend Edward Janis. But as a close friend for over fifty years there is much more to be told.

Eddie was the spark plug that ignited numismatic interest in coin clubs. His special interest was Israel and he saw to it that there were programs at every meeting. He planned a series of topics for club members to exhibit, a virtual show and tell at each meeting, where members could learn other things about their collections than how much it was worth.

He was a mentor to many, a friend, a historian, a walking numismatic encyclopedia who gave advice to the novice. His Aleph Beth column which he wrote for the SHEKEL is as current today as the day it was published. When a controversy arose over censorship on what I could or could not print, and I left the editor's post, the Aleph Beth page ceased as well. This situation was corrected a few years later and we both returned to the SHEKEL.

Eddie was the parliamentarian of A.I.N.A. He chaired all the board meetings and they were run in a professional way. He served on many committees and on the financial committee where his sound and practical advice was appreciated. He was a stickler for what is right. There is correspondence in the AINA office in which he scolded Morris for running the organization like a candy store.

Eddie designed the Bi-centennial medals that AINA issued during this year and they are among the finest of those bicentennial medals. His collecting specialties were so varied that they included City Coins of ancient Israel, Early American store cards, hard time tokens, to modern day bi-metallic coinage. It was the coin's history that attracted him, the value came second.

We were on two or three study tours to Israel with the Janis'. He knew almost as much as the guides. "Look at that" he would exclaim. "It wasn't here last year." He loved the excavations of the early towns.

One last story combining two of his hobbies. When we relocated to Florida in 1968, we purchased a large house on the water. Naturally a boat was docked in my backyard. On one of their trips to Florida, Ed and I went fishing. In the gulf stream we caught an estimated thirty pound king mackerel. I was at a loss of what to do with it. Ed took charge. He cut two long filets off the side of the fish, marinated and cooked it and we had the finest dinner imaginable. Florence speaks to Hilda regularly and we keep in touch. But I just had to add my tribute to this wonderful person.

A Touro Synagogue Founder

Naphthali Isaac Hart, a Loyalist, was one of the earliest Jewish merchants of Newport, Rhode Island. He settled there from England, as early as 1750 and soon became known as a successful merchant. He soon became one of the wealthiest merchants in the colony, and his prominent position made Hart a leader of Newport's Jewish community.

On June 13, 1756, he was one of several who purchased the land for the first synagogue in Rhode Island. He served on the committee which raised funds for the building of Newport's Touro synagogue, and his firm, Naphthali Hart and Company, erected the building. During the War of Independence, Hart favored the British cause and in 1780 the revolutionary government of Rhode Island exiled him with other Loyalists. It is related that he met his death in 1780 by being "inhumanely fired upon and bayoneted" by American soldiers during an American raid on Fort George in New York *Rivington's Gazette, Dec 2, 1780.*

The receipt, Sept 24, 1764, to William Vernon states "Sir, please to let Saml Meres have two halves Barbados Rum & place the same to the acc Yr Hbl St (account your humble servant) and signed Napht Isaac Hart."

*Recd of Mr. Meres two halves Barbados Rum
to place the same to the acc of H. Hart
Sept 24. 1764
Wm Vernon*

*Recd of Mr. Meres two halves Barbados Rum
to place the same to the acc of H. Hart
Sept 24. 1764
Wm Vernon*

CLUB BULLETIN

DONNA J. SIMS N.L.G.

Editor


P.O. Box 20255 Fountain Hills, AZ 85269

Email SIMSD@PRODIGY.NET



INS / ICC OF LOS ANGELES – The November meeting was my "swan song" of attending meetings with this group (see my comment section below). Plans for next month's annual holiday party were discussed and made. Show and Tell was the program feature and several persons participated by exhibiting recent acquired numismatic items. This is always a popular type of program to have and is almost always very educational numismatically. Meetings are held the third Thursday of the month beginning at 7:00 p.m. at Factor's Deli in Beverly Hills. Those arriving early enjoy dinner together prior to the meeting.

COMMENTS FROM DJS: The first and foremost news is to advise everyone that I have moved out of California and into Arizona. My new mailing address should appear at the top of this page (P. O. Box 20255, Fountain Hills, AZ 85269). This was an all of a sudden decision to up and quit my job, retire, and then up and make the decision to not only move but to move out of state after being a So. Californian for so many years. Please make sure you make note of this new address, especially those of you who are currently in the working stages of being "Profiled" or those of you who want to be "Profiled". Again in all sincerity, I am completely humbled from all the wonderful comments I have received regarding my "Profile" series (by email, by telephone and by mail). There are no new submissions for the Buy/Sell/ Trade section for this issue and responses to all correspondence and emails is finally up-to-date. Be well, be happy. . . .



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ALBERT EINSTEIN

COMMEMORATING 100 YEARS OF THE THEORY OF RELATIVITY

Commemorative Coin Issued by the Bank of Israel

2005 marks the 100th anniversary year of Einstein's Theory of Relativity and his Annus Mirabilis, and the 50th anniversary year of his death. This "Einstein Year" is being celebrated as the Year of Physics, with the endorsement of the United Nations.

Albert Einstein was awarded the Nobel Prize in Physics in 1921 "for his services to Theoretical Physics, and especially for his discovery of the law of the photoelectric effect".

Einstein was close in heart with Israel. In 1952, he was invited to become the second President of the State of Israel, and before his death in 1955, he left his scientific papers and his rights to the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, which he himself had helped to establish. Israel is proud to issue a Commemorative Coin as a tribute to Albert Einstein, with the authority of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

Artist Adth van Ooijen has created skillful coin designs. On the obverse, concentric circles form the portrait of Einstein and express Einstein's World of Physics, his time and space, and mass and energy theories. To fully appreciate the design, the coin obverse should be held further back than usual. When moved from side to side, the coin catches light at different angles. The movement of light created symbolizes the nature and velocity of light that played such a central role in Einstein's contributions in 1905, specifically, his work on the Photoelectric Effect and his Special Theory of Relativity.

On the reverse, around the face value, are the elliptic orbits of the planets around the sun, signifying the renewed study of planetary motion and of the universe to which Einstein's General Theory of Relativity contributed so significantly.



Coin Specifications

No.	Cat. No.	Metal and Finish	Face Value	Mint Mark	Diameter (mm)	Weight (g)	Maximum Mintage
1 >	31690300	Gold/917 22k, Proof	10 NIS	"n" (Mem)	30.0	16.96	555
2 >	21690380	Silver/925 Proof	2 NIS	"n" (Mem)	38.7	28.80	2,800
3 >	21690300	Silver/925 Proof-like	1 NIS	Star of David	30.0	14.40	2,800
4 >	71690331	Set of the 3 above coins					
5 >	71690222	Set of the 2 silver coins					
6 >	71690221	PNC with the Silver Proof Coin and First Day Cover of the Israel Philatelic Service with Einstein stamp					

ISRAEL GOVERNMENT COINS AND MEDALS CORPORATION

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TEL. 972-2-560-0133

FAX 972-2-563-4496

Email: rivkat@coins.co.il

www.coins.co.il